

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2431

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 27, 2008

Title: An act relating to cord blood banking.

Brief Description: Regarding cord blood banking.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Morris, Hudgins, Santos and Chase).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/12/08, 95-0.

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/20/08, 2/27/08 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Fairley, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Marr and Parlette.

Staff: Rhoda Donkin (786-7465)

Background: Cord blood banks, both private and public, store placental and umbilical cord blood that is collected from newborns. Public banks accept cord blood donations, store the cord blood anonymously without charge, and make it available to any patient that needs it. Private banks store the donor's collected cord blood for a fee, and the stored blood is intended for future use by the donor or donor's family.

In scientific literature, cord blood is discussed for its potential in using stem cells in regenerative medicine. These are unspecialized cells, capable of replicating and ultimately being used as specialized cells. One type of stem cell has already been used in transplants to treat leukemia, lymphoma, aplastic anemia, sickle cell anemia, and certain other inherited disorders.

Cord blood produces cells that have a lower risk of poor immune response in transplantation than cells used from other sources, such as bone marrow. According to medical literature, collecting cord blood presents minimal risk to mother and infant.

Washington law requires persons providing prenatal care or practicing medicine to provide certain information to their pregnant patients about prenatal tests. This information must be provided within time limits and according to standards established by the Department of Health.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill: The information that must be provided to pregnant patients is expanded. Health care providers of prenatal care must provide objective and standardized information to pregnant patients about the differences between private and public cord blood banks, including the potential benefits and risks of both. The information must be sufficient to allow a pregnant woman to make a decision before her third trimester of pregnancy about whether to participate in a cord blood bank program.

Private cord blood banks must be accredited by both the state and the federal government.

Violations of these provisions applying to private cord blood banks is a violation of the Consumer Protection Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2010.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Substitute Bill: PRO: Both private and public donations of cord blood should be based on accurate and unbiased information. Efforts need to be made to provide this information in a culturally and linguistically appropriate way to pregnant women before their third trimester. This will strengthen current and future practices of cord blood donation.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Douglas Mora, Puget Sound Blood Center.